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RUCNCOM/EC CARICOM COLLECTIVE

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SIPDIS

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SENSITIVE

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SUBJECT: JAMAICA: OPERATION KINGFISH'S THIRD ANNIVERSARY;
INQUIRY re JOINT U.S.-CARICOM LIGHT ARMS INITIATIVE

REF: State 49116 (131333Z Apr 07)

Summary and Action Requested

1. (SBU) Operation Kingfish, Jamaica's highly successful counter-narcotics and major crimes task force, marked its third anniversary at a ceremony attended by Ambassador Johnson and NAS Director on October 19. The Minister of National Security warned all drug dealers and organized crime syndicates that Kingfish's operations will intensify. During prepared remarks to the media, he also urged the U.S. to establish an Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearm Liaison Office in Kingston. In a side bar meeting after the ceremony, the NAS Director addressed the preliminary negotiations between the Jamaica Constabulary Force and the ATF office in Miami, and reminded the Ministry's Permanent Secretary, that CARICOM's continued stalling of the proposed Joint U.S.-CARICOM Light Arms Initiative (Reftel) could negatively impact negotiations for any future Kingston-based ATF office.

2. Post would appreciate Department's guidance as to:

(A) the current state of play regarding the Joint U.S.-CARICOM Light Arms Initiative; and
(B) whether, as indicated in Reftel, Department will consider releasing the statement bilaterally and moving forward with bi-lateral anti-trafficking collaboration. End Summary and Action Requested

Kingfish's 3rd Birthday

3. (U) Since January 2007, Kingfish has continued its track record of success recovering 55 firearms, and 3000+ plus rounds of ammunition. Its officers also have arrested 130 suspects, apprehended 20 wanted individuals, and seized 10 boats, 15 pounds of cocaine, and 5,079 pounds of compressed marijuana. Most importantly, Kingfish has set a standard for investigative excellence within the Jamaica Constabulary Force. It has a 100% success rate, as all Kingfish cases brought to court have resulted in convictions.

Kingfish will keep up the pressure

4. (U) Both the Minister of National Security and the Kingfish Commander, Assistant Commissioner of Police Glenmore Hinds, warned Jamaica's remaining drug dons that Kingfish was not going to rest on its laurels, but instead would intensify its efforts to break their organizations. Minister Smith also charged Kingfish with taking on the extortion rings that have developed in most communities, which demand protection money from small, medium, and large enterprises, and which in his view are choking off commerce in Jamaica.

15. (SBU) During his speech the Minister referenced current low-level discussions that have occurred between the Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms Miami office and Deputy Commissioner of Police, Mark Shields. Shields went to the U.S. in December 2006, to make the case in Tampa for the need to open up an ATF liaison office in Kingston. Shields confirmed on October 24, that the Tampa officials with whom he spoke are supportive of an expanded ATF role, and they have invited Shields to Washington to brief official there. Shields intends to follow up with ATF-Tampa to arrange the briefing, likely in November. If the details can be worked out, Post is in favor of having ATF in Jamaica.

"Ganja for Guns" Trade

16. (SBU) There is a thriving "ganja for guns" trade between Jamaica and its neighbors, and there is more than anecdotal evidence that the weapons, not only coming into Jamaica via Haiti but also increasingly through containerized cargo, are of U.S. origin. In a side-bar meeting after the ceremony between the NAS Director and the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of National Security, Gilbert Scott, the NAS Director took the opportunity to again raise CARICOM's failure to move forward on the Light Arms Initiative (Reftel) and suggested that such a move would send an appropriate signal regarding CARICOM's seriousness in trying to stem the flow of illegal weapons to the region and could be the basis to initiate any serious discussion of creation of new liaison relationships.

17. (SBU) The Permanent Secretary indicated that the Initiative has stalled in CARICOM because some member states are refusing to

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respond to CARICOM's repeated requests for consensus to issue the joint press release. He reiterated Jamaica's desire to move forward bilaterally on implementation of a program against light arms trafficking. Post would appreciate Department guidance as to:

(A) the current state of play regarding the Initiative; and
(B) whether, as indicated Reftel, Department will consider releasing the statement bilaterally and moving forward with bi-lateral anti-trafficking collaboration..

Johnson